

Strategic Communications Plan

SMILES Dental Home Project

Company Background:

Caring for Colorado is a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote health and improve health care for Coloradans.

Project Background:

In 2015, Caring for Colorado launched SMILES (Spanning Miles In Linking Everyone to Services) Dental Home Project, a five-year, \$3.5 million initiative to bring oral health care to low-income Coloradans. SMILES relies on a hub-and-spoke model to deploy Registered Dental Hygienists into communities (community centers, schools and Head Start programs, nursing homes and assisted living facilities, places of worship, etc.) where they provide routine, preventive dental services. The Registered Dental Hygienists communicate with a “hub” dentist via telehealth technology for patient assessments and treatment planning.

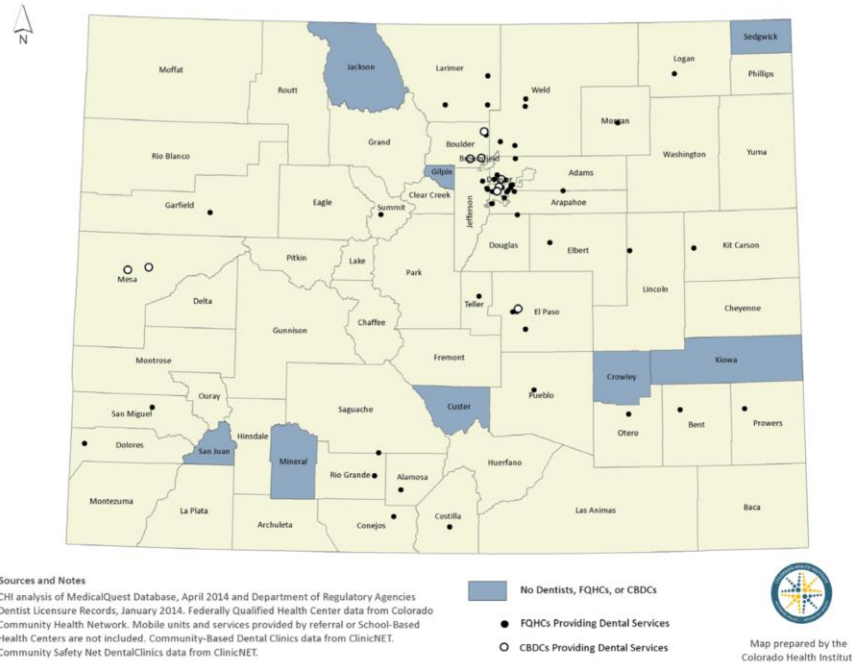
Marketing Objective:

To increase awareness of the SMILES Dental Home Project and to encourage low-income families to receive free dental care through clear messaging that benefits all community stakeholders.

Consumer Research and Insights: (Source: Delta Dental Foundation)

- Tooth pain is the #1 reason kids miss school in Colorado
- As many as half of all Coloradans don't receive routine, preventive oral health care – most of whom live in low-income, rural communities and are unable to afford or conveniently access dental care in a traditional dental office
- Poor dental health can lead to heart disease and other complications
- Children are commonly treated for preventable dental emergencies at Children's Hospital Colorado
- Less than 1/3 of practicing dentists in Colorado accept Medicaid
- 8 counties are “dental deserts” with no available providers

Map 1. Colorado Counties with No Access to Dentists, 2014



Segmentation and Target Market:

The program targets low-income, rural families who do not have access to a dentist. These families typically have low oral health literacy and are scared of the dentist. This target demographic is on Medicaid and has traditionally only received dental care in emergency situations. Research suggests that these families generally have 3-4 kids and are very family centric. The parents are receptive to health education and want their children to be happy and healthy.

Behavioral Objective:

To encourage low-income families to change their mindset about dental care and to routinely visit dental health providers through the SMILES Dental Home Program.

Business Objective:

To create a sustainable model that increases dentist and patient participation in an effort to lower dental costs, expand access, and reduce dental disease.

Positioning:

For low-income, rural families, SMILES Dental Home Project provides convenient and affordable access to dental health professionals.

Messaging:

- Tagline: “Spreading Smiles Across Colorado” (see Exhibit 1)
- Positive tone that educates parents and kids
- Inspires low-income families to take better care of their teeth
- Conveys that together, Colorado can be a healthier place

Tactics:

- Tooth Fair-y event to raise awareness and interest
 - Annual weekend event hosted at a community school
 - One stop resource to provide care, supplies, and educational tools
 - Fun and accessible
- Mobile “Tooth Trailer” to promote program and provide care (see Exhibit 2)
- Short videos to capture Tooth Fair-y highlights and generate buzz
- Educational videos to teach kids oral health basics
 - Ask kids teeth trivia on film
 - Include a health professional for expert advice
 - Upload to YouTube
 - Share in schools
- Social media to create community and spread awareness
 - Establish #toothfairy and #spreadingSMILES to encourage posting/sharing
 - Post videos to Caring for Colorado’s social pages
- Caring for Colorado website/blog to inform dental community of progress

Success Metrics:

Metric	What it Means?
Percentage of parents signing consent forms	Indicates if parents understand the program and its value
Amount of appointments fulfilled	Identifies any barriers to service
Social media vanity metrics (likes, comments, etc.)	Captures stakeholder engagement and sentiment
Number of hosted Tooth Fair-y events	Measures scale and growth
Decrease in emergency room visits	Quantifies behavioral objective
Reduce dental disease in Colorado (i.e. Has Children’s Hospital Colorado seen fewer cases since implementation?)	Gauges health of community

SWOT Analysis:

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tested concept in California/Proven model• \$3.5 million in funding• Buy-in from community/school leaders	<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stakeholders receptive to health education• Parents want kids to be happy and successful
<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of program awareness• Small budget• Limited resources (i.e. Marketing staff)	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poverty• Low oral health literacy• 8 counties without dental providers• Negative attitudes toward dentists

Exhibit 1: Logo Ideas



Exhibit 2: Tooth Trailer

